a model legislation on agricultural marketing. The Committee is in the process of consulting the State Government/UT Administration for finalizing the Model Legislation.

Rationale for increasing the MSP

3171. SHRIMATI BIMBA RAIKAR : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it has been propsed to fix a Minimum Support Price (MSP) for paddy during 2003-04 at Rs. 550/- and Rs. 580/- for two grades;

(b) if so, what is the rationale behind Government's enhancing the MSP for paddy, wheat and sugarcane every year considering that FCI is holding huge unsold stocks of these commodities in its warehouses;

(c) whether a component of Special Drought Relief of Rs. 20/- per quintal is included in the MSP for 2003-04 as in the earlier years; and

(d) who is the beneficiary of this Special Drought Relief Fund—the farmer or Government, as with good monsoons no more drought conditions prevail in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV) : (a) The Government has already fixed the Minimum Support Price (MSP) for paddy—common and paddy grade 'A' at Rs. 550/- and Rs. 580/- per quintal respectively for 2003-04 season.

(b) The Government decides on the MSP of various agricultural commodities taking into account the recommendations of the Commission for Agricultural Costs & Prices (CACP), the views of the State Governments and Central Ministries as well as such other relevant factors which, in the opinion of the Government are important for fixation of support prices.

The Food Corporation of India (FCI) does not procure sugarcane and hence there are no huge unsold stocks of sugarcane in its warehouses.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

Production of Potato and Onion

3172. SHRI SURENDRA LATH : Will the Minister of AGRICULTUR be pleased to state :